

## ROME CITY PARK BOARD

Regular Meeting  
November 18, 2024

The Rome City Park Board held their regular meeting on Monday, November 18, 2024, at 5:30 p.m., in the Rome City Town Hall. Called to order by President Wilkinson.

Members Present:

Leigh A. Pranger-Secretary

John Martin

Tina Wilkinson

Bridgett Coe

Roll call a quorum was present.

Interested parties in attendance: Joel Wilkinson and Paul Hoffman

Member Martin made a motion to approve the minutes as presented. Second by Member Coe. All in favor-aye. Motion Carried.

- a) New Member recruitment-The board was encouraged to come up with two names for a new park board member in 2025. President Wilkinson informed the board she approached Nicole Ritchie and then suggested her son Trey Ritchie. Secretary Pranger said she would go through the Lake Directory and ask Jenny Dunderman-Town Deputy Clerk and Cheryl Clifton-Town Council member to see if they can suggest a few people. Review organizational membership, Chamber, SLA, ARC AND LIONS CLUB.
- b) Joel Wilkinson was present to discuss setting a contract to do the social media for the Park Board events. He stated he can set up a Facebook page for the Rome City Park Board and the items posted can be shared to the town page or vice versa. Joel stated he can also do an Instagram account as younger people tend to use this platform. He noted Meta owns both platforms and things can be cross posted to both accounts. He noted that posts can be scheduled and the board can also retire post if they want to. He stated the accounts will need to have at least three people to be the administrators and we will use a 2-factor with a pin #. We will need one person's phone for the accounts to be attached too. Secretary Pranger's phone should be used as it is paid for by the town. The board agreed that hiring Joel will be a huge help in promoting our parks. The board stated they would like to pay Mr. Joel Wilkinson \$100 per month to do the marketing for the park, this includes posters, QR codes and social media accounts. Joel stated he would be happy to the marketing for the board. Member Coe made a motion to pay Joel Wilkinson \$100 per month for the marketing service. Second by Member Martin. All in favor0aye. Motion Carried.

**Update on Chautauqua Committee:** President Wilkinson stated, nothing is happening with this committee no scheduled meetings.

### **Kelly Park**

- a) Secretary Pranger sent out a selection of picnic tables for the board to review. The board decided to purchase four picnic tables-2 wheelchair accessible and 2- 6' table with the 2-3/8" OED, 3-flat top benches for the new tennis/pickleball courts, pickleballs and buckets for the tournament. The board instructed Pranger to make the purchases, if they are not delivered by the end of the year, we can encumber the money.

### **Grant Park**

- a) Secretary Pranger informed the board we had a citizen contact our social media page requesting a paved pathway to the dog park for ADA compliance. The board will

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investigate this for 2025 or 2026. President Wilkinson discussed installing a drive entrance off Canal Road with a small parking lot for the dog park. This would provide closer parking and cost less to install a paved pathway for ADA.

- b) Paul Hoffman suggested the board look into adding a pavilion over the estimating concrete pad in Grant Park and then the board might be able to rent out park.

#### **Dog Park - Opening of Park-September 7th:**

- a) The board asked Pranger to look up benches with covers. The board liked the covered bench from Webstaurant store in Green. They instructed Pranger to purchase the bench. If it is not delivered this year, we can encumber the funds.
- b) The board approved the purchase of an additional dog station to be placed at the edge of the parking lot to decrease the amount of dropping from the parking lot to the dog park. Pranger will order.
- c) The board reviewed dog park items, a tunnel, walking plank and other toys. They requested Pranger get a quote and forward by email for the board to decide which items to purchase.

#### **Sycamore Park**

Pranger informed the board that the large Sycamore Tree along the upper east side of the park will have to be removed for the upcoming SR9 bridge repair project. Pranger is in the process of obtaining quotes from tree services. Once the tree is removed the town sign will be moved to the area where the tree was located, and more guard rails will be installed for the upgraded bridge. Work projected for 2026.

#### **Lakeside Park**

- a) The board instructed Pranger to purchase a bench with a back for the basketball court. They suggested a recycled plastic bench in brown. Pickleball net to be installed in the spring of 2025.
- b) Jim Wilkinson submitted an updated billing on the replacement of the Lakeside Sign on the Westend. The total ended up being \$1,308 as he had to replace some of the wood and purchase some field stone to complete the project. The board approved the bill to be paid as submitted. He stated the quote for Gaff Park of \$2,500 might have to be increased due to the cost of field stone. The board started just let us know in the spring when you begin work on the sign. Pranger informed the board that Miller's Sign Company will be here on Monday to install the sign. The Gaff Park Sign will be stored until Spring when the work can commence.
- c) The town guys installed the lady statue inside the triangle of the sidewalks down by the lake and native ground cover -stonecrop to be planted in the triangle spring of 2025.
- d) Secretary Pranger informed the board she applied for a playground grant and was waiting to hear back. Pranger forwarded the updates to the playground design to the board, that were made by Wendy Mink with Midstates. Playground design: after reviewing the design from Midstates and the sale flyer. The board said we just need to come up with a proposed playground and a cost for fundraising. The product will change as the board stated they will most likely purchase sale items for the playground. The board decided they would like to install a separate area for 2-5 year olds and 5-12 year olds. President Wilkinson stated she will contact Wendy Smith to see if the play equipment sets, we picked out this spring to see if they are still available.
- e) Playground Fundraising: The board needs to work on obtaining grants to help fund the playground. Noble County Community Foundation, Dekko, and Cole Foundation regarding their grant cycles. President Wilkinson brought pictures of the new playground

in Lagrange and thought we might be able to incorporate some of the items they have in our design.

- f) Discussed getting a landscaper to install native Indiana trees along lake this fall or have Hulen's plant them. On Hold until we see the money situation

**Gaff Park Trail head:**

- a) **Concert(s) in Gaff Park:** Board stated their January meeting will be a work session on concerts and food trucks for 2025.
- b) Pranger informed the board the Autumn Blaze Maple Tree has been planted and a guard added to the trunk to keep deer off.
- c) **New Sign in Gaff Park:** Need to discuss date we want Miller's Sign Company to install the wood structure for the sign in the spring. The board needs to figure out where they want the sign to be installed.
- d) President Wilkinson informed the board the installation of the musical Equipment has been installed. President Wilkinson stated we should move former Town Council Gary Furlow's bench out by the bells. Secretary Pranger informed the board that unless we have a warm day this might be waiting until spring. We can install concrete pavers under the bench for easier mowing. **Need to discuss pathway around and possible landscaping in the middle-with ARC.** The board looked for a musical piece to add to the area and agreed on th
- e) **Trail project** completed except for some signage. A ribbon cutting ceremony will be held on Saturday, October 26, 2024, at in progress, asphalt has been laid, topcoat applied, waiting on the pm in Gaff Park.
- f) The board informed Pranger to close the Gaff Park restrooms on November 15<sup>th</sup> or 22<sup>nd</sup> depending on the weather.

**CELEBRATION IN THE PARK 2025:** The board discussed doing a first Friday Concert series with food trucks on June 6, August 1 and September 5. Secretary Pranger suggested we start planning this fall and work on sponsors for the event next winter so we can do a poster of all the concerts and perhaps include the Chamber Lyrics events to help offset the advertising costs. Secretary Pranger informed the board we might need to purchase a music subscription due to the copyrights on music for the concert series. President Wilkinson and Secretary Pranger will look into this.

Paul Hoffman suggested the board look into movie nights for the summer and fall nights. He stated he will be purchasing the projector for the Marshal office and the Park Board would be able to use it. The board stated that it would be a good idea.

President Wilkinson reminded Member Coe that her term will be up this year and is she willing to serve another term. Bridgett asked for time to think about it, and she will contact either Secretary Pranger or President Wilkinson with her decision.

**2024 Budget**

Park Donation Account	\$28,415.51
#119-Park Maintenance	\$ .73
#135-Contractual	\$ 2,018.50
#234-Park Supplies	\$ 1,834.68
#341-Park Insurance-Don't Spend	\$ 3,679.40
#352-Park Light-Don't spend	\$ 2,037.20

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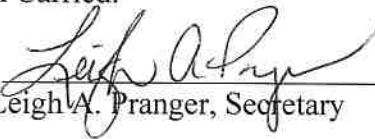
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#362-Park Repairs	\$ 2,975.88
#430-Park Improvement	\$24,537.86
#442-Park Equipment	<u>\$12,059.78</u>
Total	\$49,144.03 + 28,415.51=\$77,559.54

Next Meeting: January 20, 2025 at 5:30 p.m. Secretary Pranger informed the board the February meeting will fall on President's Day and asked that it be moved to next week. Member Coe made a motion to hold the February meeting February 24, 2025, due to the holiday. Second by Member Martin. All in favor-aye. Motion Carried.

Member Coe a motion to adjourn the regular meeting at 7:15 p.m. Second by Member Martin. All in favor-aye. Motion Carried.

Respectfully Submitted:

  
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Leigh A. Pranger, Secretary

## Suggestions/Ideas for Future

### Kelly Park

- a) \*Replace baseball back stop or reinforce-on hold- fill in hole around manhole behind home plate.
- b) Look into reconstruction of tennis courts for 2025.
- c) \*Secretary Pranger informed the board the sports complex had horseshoe and shuffleboard courts, and Strawser Brothers did the work.

**Gaff Park-) Sled Box:** The board discussed the idea of a Free Sled Box in Gaff Park. President Wilkinson brought proposal from Albion Parks Department about installing a free sled box for the kids to borrow a sled and then leave it in the box when they are done. No decision was made.

### Grant Park

- a) \*Hold indefinitely-Concrete pads under bleachers.

### Lakeside

- a) Member Maley showed the board his power point on items that might be considered for the playground area. Musical Flowers \$1600, Xylophone \$6000, Musical Bench. He showed the board play equipment in the shape of a boat-the board expressed interest to keep with the lake theme. Exercise Stations for adults and kids could be added along the sidewalk. Secretary Pranger showed the board a new catalog from Summit Supply with ideas for a musical park or adult workout stations.
- b) The board requested Pranger look into a possible grant for the installation of a small boat ramp at the east end of Lakeside Park. Pranger stated there is money available through Land & Water Conservation funds for this type of project. Boat ramp for kayak, canoes, and paddleboards-Land Water Conservation Grant

\*\*location for President Furlow's bench-Pranger suggested it be installed at the musical bells in Gaff Park.

### Sycamore Park

On Hold-The board discussed the need for a hitching post in Sycamore Park so the Amish quit tying their horses to the trees. Secretary Partner suggested we contact the Amish bishop and ask them to maintain a poop station, so the manure is not leaching into the Little Lake. President Wilkinson stated she might have a contact. The board also stated if a hitching post is installed someone needs to be responsible for cleaning up the horse waste-this can also be discussed with the Amish.

Miscellaneous Business: The board discussed member ethics and stated they would like the Town Council to pass a policy that background checks be performed for all board members prior to appointment. Any board member arrested for a felony will be automatically placed on a leave of absence from the board until the court hearing. The board members' seats are to remain open and not filled until a determination is made in court. Secretary Pranger stated she will forward their concerns to the Town Council for their input and possible policy update.